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GALLERIES

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GRAHAM SUTHERLAND



February 26 — March 23, 1946

BUCHHOLZ GALLERY
CURT VALENTIN
32 EAST 57TH STREET • NEW YORK





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21. III. 1946.



CAT. 33

Estuary Foresbore

Graham Sutherland

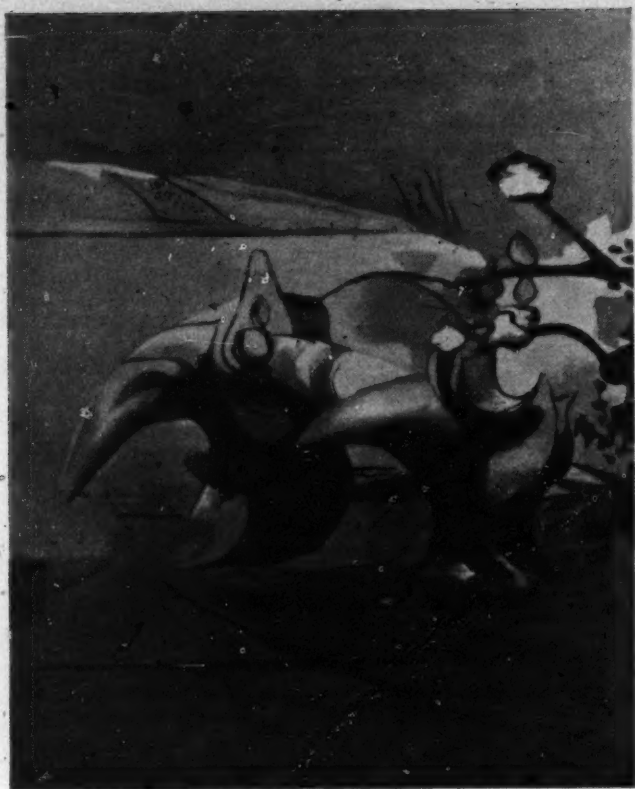
BORN IN LONDON, ENGLAND, 1903

LIVES IN TROTTISCLIFFE, KENT, ENGLAND

*Sometime we see a cloud that's dragonish;
A vapour sometimes like a bear or lion,
A tower'd citadel, a pendant rock,
A forked mountain, or blue promontory
With trees upon't, that nod unto the world
And mock our eyes with air: thou hast seen
these signs;
They are black vespers' pageants.*

—SHAKESPEARE

THESE are, as I have sought obliquely to indicate, in Moore and Sutherland the materials of a modern mythology. It is not only that, in excellence of technique and invention, they are two of the most significant artists of our time; they possess, as well, the unmoved, receptive eyes which alone can reflect the tragic idyll of contemporary England. The mystery, the



CAT. 2

Horned Forms

intricate beauty—gay with tartan sunbeams or gloomy with undern colour—of Sutherland's landscapes; the aloof and monumental distinction of Moore's beings, grouped against the tunnelled inferno of a world poised between an end and a beginning: here, surely, is a complementary vision that takes us back, in its noble adequacy and completeness, to the stupendous world of Piero della Francesca.

We are back again among the primitive gods: at one moment a knot in oak-bark, at the next a hand emerging from the darkness of a stope; it

is the same limb, lit now by the sun, now by a bud of white flame.* The double image flickers back and forth: these pictures are all alive, like a wood fire at shut of day, under the ashes. They glow out suddenly, with a wicked gleam, then return to their frames. It has happened to me to return after absence and find them changed; a passage here, another there, seems to have increased suddenly in intention, to mean something new in the conjugation of shapes and tones. They alter, too, with the quality and quantity of light they receive, so that at sunset a picture depicting that time of day has more quality than by morning light; and vice versa. At night they collect the shadows of the room into themselves. Catching sight of one suddenly in a mirror, as I pass, I know that I am under observation.

Edward Sackville-West.

*This was written partly with some mining war pictures in mind, but the double image idea is the same.

Letter from Graham Sutherland to Colin Anderson:

"It seemed impossible for me to sit down and make finished paintings 'from Nature.' Indeed, there were no ready-made subjects to paint. The spaces and concentrations of this clearly constructed land were stuff for storing in the mind. Their essence was intellectual and emotional, if I may say so. I found that I could express what I felt only by paraphrasing what I saw. Moreover, such country did not seem to make men appear little as does some country of the grander sort. I felt just as much part of the earth as my features were part of me. I did not feel that my imagination was in conflict with the real, but that reality was a dispersed and disintegrated form of imagination."



CAT. 5

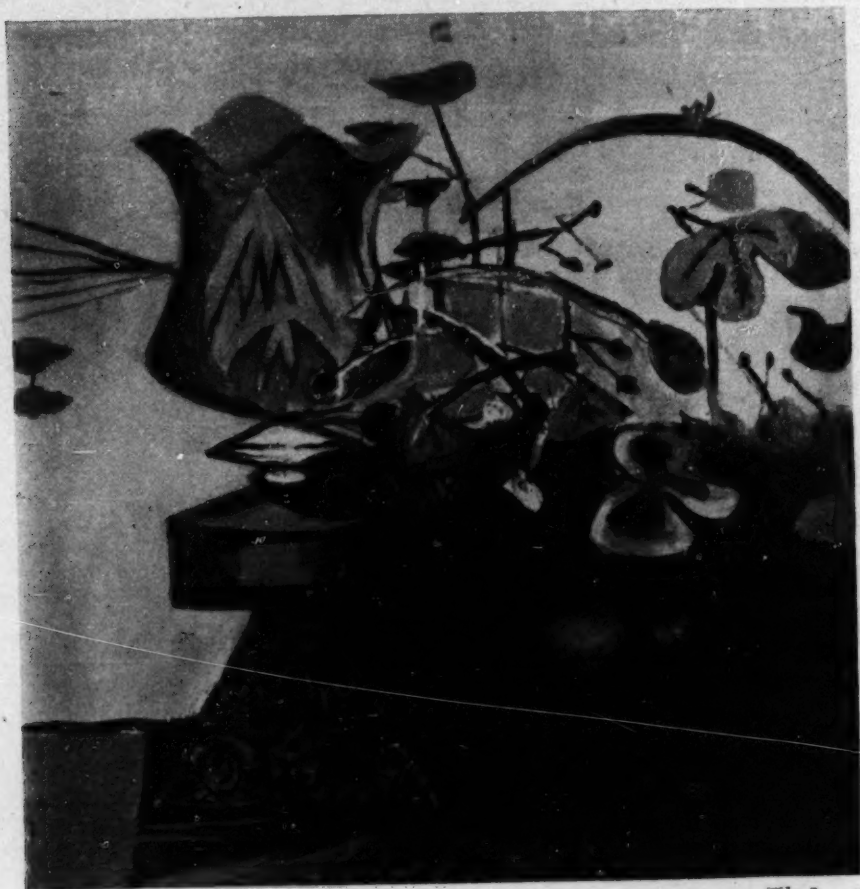
Thistles

C A T A L O G U E

1944 - 1945

1. Thorn Trees. Oil.
2. Horned Forms. Oil.
3. Woman picking Vegetables. Oil.
4. Green Tree Form. Oil.
5. Thistles. Oil.

6. The Lamp. Oil.
7. Landscape with Pointed Hills. Oil.
8. Smiling Woman. Oil.
9. Corn and Stone. Chalk & Gouache.
10. Association of Thistles. Ink, Chalk & Oil.
11. Entrance to Lane. Chalk & Gouache.
12. Movement of Trees on Cliff. Chalk & Gouache.



CAT. 6

The Lamp

13. Tree Form ravaged by Sea. Chalk, Ink & Gouache.
14. Thorn Head. Chalk, Ink & Gouache.
15. Entrance to Lane with Interlacing Foliage. Chalk, Ink & Gouache.
16. Landscape with Mounds and Impinging Forms. Chalk, Ink & Gouache.
17. Red Thistles. Chalk & Gouache.
18. Thistles and Sun. Chalk & Gouache.
19. Rocky Landscape. Gouache.
20. Interlocking Hills. Chalk, Ink & Gouache.
21. Staring Tree Forms. Chalk, Ink & Gouache.
22. Exotic Landscape. Chalk & Gouache.
23. Cairn. Chalk, Ink & Gouache.
24. Landscape with Pointed Rocks. Ink & Gouache.
25. Green Landscape. Gouache & Chalk.
26. Firebasket. Chalk, Ink & Gouache.
27. Woman with Apple. Chalk & Gouache.
28. Thorns. Chalk, Ink & Gouache.
29. Interlocking Tree Forms. Chalk, Ink & Gouache.
30. Woman in Garden. Gouache.
31. Tree Form. Chalk, Ink & Gouache.
32. Two Hills. Chalk, Ink & Gouache.
33. Estuary Foreshore. Ink & Wash.
34. Root Form. Ink & Wash.
35. Landscape with Fields. Chalk, Ink & Gouache.

Dear Curt Valentin:

About my thorn pictures; I can only give a clue, since the process of becoming involved with one's subject is always mysterious and not easy to explain. One reacts to the reality of tension in a subject, physical and spiritual or psychological; and that tension paraphrased and ordered should become immediate and intensified in one's painting.

I had been thinking of the Crucifixion (as you know I hope to attempt this subject for St. Matthew, Northampton) my mind became preoccupied with the idea of thorns (the crown of thorns) and wounds made by thorns.

Then on going into the country I began to notice thorn trees and bushes. Especially against the sky, the thorns on the branches established a limit of aerial space. They were like dividers pricking out points in



CAT. 30

Woman in Garden

space in all directions, encompassing the air, as if it were solid and tangible. I'd never noticed this before: but all kinds of ideas for pictures started to come into my mind. Apart from the large "Thorn Trees" I had several ideas for "Thorn Heads." A sort of 'pricking' and demarkation of a hollow headshaped space enclosed by the points. All the paintings I have done started off with drawings and sketches direct from nature.

I-24-1946.

Yours Graham Sutherland



Graham Sutherland



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